

10 SEPTEMBER – 1 NOVEMBER 2020

NOT WITHOUT MY GHOSTS: THE ARTIST AS MEDIUM

Not Without My Ghosts: The Artist As Medium is an exhibition of artists and works inspired by mediumistic methodologies and their deep cultural history. Featuring 26 international artists and collectives from the 19th century to the present day, it explores the changing historical and aesthetic terms of artistic engagement with mediumship; from perceived spiritual inspiration and creation during séances and trances, to practices of automatism, channelling, and paranormal investigation.

The exhibition takes as its starting point the visionary work of William Blake and the largely forgotten Victorian spirit artists Georgiana Houghton, Anna Mary Howitt and Barbara Honywood. Their work, strikingly at odds with prevailing traditions of artistic expression, was based on spirit experiences and communications with higher powers. The exhibition progresses onto Surrealist experiments with automatism, and moves through the 20th Century where work by artists Austin Osman Spare, Ithell Colquhoun and Cameron draws on techniques of automatism combined with an interest in ritualised forms of occultism.

Concluding with works from contemporary artists including Ann Churchill, Louise Despont, Susan Hiller, Lea Porsager and Suzanne Treister with The Museum of Blackhole Spacetime Collective, *Not Without My Ghosts* demonstrates how contemporary artists are still using the concept of the unseen and the ghostly to explore the radical ambiguities of the world around them.

Acting as a primer rather than a definitive treaty, *Not Without My Ghosts* addresses 200 years of medium art by exploring how artists have been inspired or directly influenced by forces beyond those accepted by the modern world. In the context of this exhibition, the creation of art is understood as a process of receiving and channeling forces that expand the limits of human experience. For some artists, their works function as evidence of another realm of existence, for others the mediation between the hidden and the visible world is utilised as a response to the complexity and strangeness of life. With a large proportion of work by female artists, the exhibition illustrates how it has been primarily women who have engaged with and interpreted spirit art and the mediumistic. In this way the exhibition considers spirit art as an aspect of feminism over the last two centuries.

Not Without My Ghosts: The Artist As Medium is a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition from Southbank Centre, London, developed in partnership with Drawing Room, curated by Lars Bang Larsen, Simon Grant and Marco Pasi. It will travel to Sheffield, Swansea, Plymouth and Blackpool, later this year and into 2021.

DRAWING ROOM



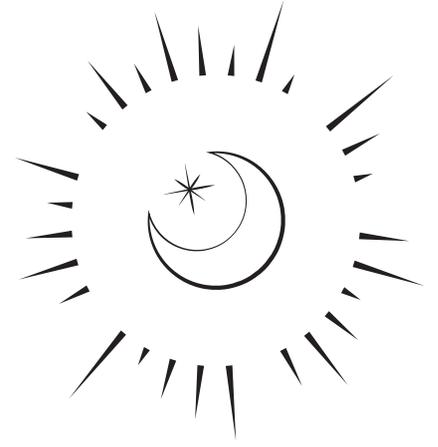
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SPACETIME COLLECTIVE
WITH THE MUSEUM OF BACKHOLE
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